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Delaware Department of Justice Teams Up with the Ad Council for New Youth Reckless Driving Prevention Campaign

UR the Spokesperson campaign empowers teens to 'Speak Up'

The Delaware Department of Justice is partnering with The Advertising Council on a new campaign aimed at putting the brakes on fatal car crashes involving teens and young adults. Attorney General Joseph R. Biden, III joins the Ad Council and a coalition of state Attorneys General and consumer protection agencies, and national partners such as SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) and AAA (American Automobile Association), to promote the new *UR the Spokesperson* campaign to prevent reckless driving and save lives.

Car crashes are the number one cause of death among teens and young adults. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data show that, on average, more than 300,000 teens are injured in car crashes each year, nearly 8,000 are involved in fatal crashes and more than 3,500 are killed. NHTSA research also shows that teen drivers are involved in more than five times as many fatal crashes as adults. Young drivers are more likely to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns and die in an SUV rollover.

With the message "Speak Up," the *UR the Spokesperson* campaign targets young adults between the ages of 15 and 21 and encourages them to be the spokesperson against reckless driving by empowering them to speak up when they are in the car with friends and don't feel safe. The campaign also seeks to increase awareness about the dangers of reckless driving and educate teens on how to be safe drivers by focusing on safe speeds, avoiding distractions, and wearing seat belts.

"Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death among 15 to 20-year-olds nationally," Biden said. "It is important that we educate teens on how to be safe drivers. That is why I have joined this campaign to encourage teens to 'Speak Up' for their safety."

The *UR the Spokesperson* campaign includes a series of public service advertisements (PSAs), a new Web site and a soon-to-be launched contest. Created pro bono by North Castle, a Stamford-based advertising agency that specializes in reaching teens, the PSAs target teen passengers, rather than the driver, and encourage them to speak-up when they don't feel safe. Research shows that young drivers may be more likely to listen to their friends than to adults, which is why the *UR the Spokesperson* campaign is using a peer-to-peer approach. When it is a friend who speaks up, a teenage driver will listen because they don't want to damage the friendship or be labeled a bad driver.

"We want it to become not only socially acceptable, but socially expected for teens to speak up when they are riding with a friend and don't feel safe," said Peggy Conlon, President and CEO of the Ad Council. "We also want to educate them about the dangers and consequences of reckless driving by reminding them to drive safely, wear their seat belts and limit distractions."



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For more information on the campaign and to see the ads, please visit www.URtheSpokesperson.com.

The Advertising Council

The Ad Council (www.adcouncil.org) is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to affect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives.

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